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JPRS Report

Epidemiology

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INTER-AFRICAN

Scientists Oppose Testing AIDS Drugs on Africans

54000005 Lagos *DAILY TIMES* in English
18 Sep 88 p 3

[Excerpts] Senior scientists, attending an international conference on AIDS, in Arusha, northern Tanzania, have voiced strong opposition to turning Africans into guinea-pigs for testing AIDS vaccines.

The experts maintained that medical researchers would be losing sight of their professional ethics by conducting trials of the vaccines on human beings and they demanded the establishment of scientific and ethical procedures to guide the testing of those vaccines.

More than 1,000 researchers and medical scientists from 45 countries are participating in the conference to exchange information on research into the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and associated conditions.

A leading Tanzanian researcher, Professor Fred Ngalu, told newsmen that Tanzania, like other African countries, would not allow the anti-AIDS vaccines to be tried on human beings.

SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg Leads Country in AIDS Cases

54000018 Johannesburg *SOWETAN* in English
12 Oct 88 p 1

[Article by Mokgadi Pela]

[Text] Johannesburg alone carries 80 out of all the 89 AIDS cases in the Transvaal, according to the advisory group on the killer disease.

Since 1982 when the first AIDS carrier was discovered in South Africa, a total of 143 people have been diagnosed as positive sufferers.

This means that Johannesburg has 58 percent of the country's AIDS victims.

An expert on the disease, Dr Ruben Sher, has once again appealed to the public to heed health authorities' advice. People have been advised that there was no vaccine for the disease except for a change in sexual behavior.

He said South Africans did not realize they were sitting on a time bomb with AIDS spreading like wild fire. "AIDS has no race prejudice, it will infect anyone given the right circumstances, for instance, sexual contact."

He said the 20th century has had to contend with three disasters of unmeasurable magnitude. They were the Holocaust in Germany, the Hiroshima atomic explosion and AIDS. "This disease has no precedent in medical history," Dr Sher added.

Vaccine for Hepatitis A Developed
54004813 Beijing XINHUA in English 23 Jul 88

[Text] Beijing, 23 Jul (XINHUA)—China has developed a vaccine for hepatitis "A," a disease which ran rampant in Shanghai earlier this year, today's PEOPLE'S DAILY reported.

Results of the research, a project listed in China's Seventh Five-Year Plan (1986-1990), just received the seal of approval from China's Ministry of Public Health.

Hailing the success as "a breakthrough in China's medical research," the PEOPLE'S DAILY said, the new vaccine will make it easier to control epidemics of hepatitis "A" and will make prevention to the disease possible.

Between this 19 January and 26 May, 311,938 cases of hepatitis "A" were reported in Shanghai, where, during the same time, 30 people died of the disease.

Mao Jiangsen and his colleagues at the Zhejiang Academy of Medical Sciences started China's research on hepatitis "A" 8 years ago, and in 1985, these scientists were joined by Dong Dexiang and others from the Chinese Academy of Medical Science's Biology Institute.

In May, 1987, the paper said, employees of the Zhejiang Academy of Medical Sciences and their relatives were inoculated with the new vaccine, and after a 20-week observation, the vaccine produced no side effects and displayed a satisfactory immune effect.

Also this year, children between 4 and 12 years old were inoculated and once again the vaccine proved safe and effective.

HONG KONG

Conference Debates Use of Interferon for Hepatitis B

54400012a Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING
POST in English 7 Oct 88 p 3

[Article by Mary Ann Benitez]

[Text] International liver experts attending a conference in Hongkong are at odds over whether doctors can start using interferon, previously hailed as the wonder cancer drug, on hepatitis B carriers.

In a classic case of East not meeting West, Chinese doctors from Hongkong said they would not begin to use the regimen yet except in well-controlled trials, while doctors from Europe and Australia said under special circumstances the drug could be used.

A study on the effectivity of the drug is currently being done in Hongkong. Elsewhere more than 100 studies have indicated interferon could be the drug of the future for hepatitis B carriers suffering from an active liver disease.

The aim of the therapy is to eradicate the virus among those already infected, preventing its further spread, while remission of the liver disease can be induced. The development of cirrhosis and liver cancer, which are directly caused by the virus, will also be prevented.

Leading Hongkong researcher on the treatment of hepatitis B infection, now connected with Georgetown University in the United States, Dr Anna Lok, said: "I would tend to be conservative and I would say that we have not found an effective treatment for the majority of patients who are hepatitis B infected."

The experts were speaking at the Joint Conference of the Hongkong Society of Gastroenterology and the Gastroenterological Society of Australia yesterday.

Dr Lok said many Chinese patients who were infected early from their mothers responded very poorly to interferon. She acknowledged though that about half the Caucasian patients not infected by any other virus would respond to some form of interferon therapy.

"I do not recommend that anyone who has access to interferon start using it on patients because if it is not used properly, it can produce more harm than good," she said.

Australian Dr Alf Eddleston disagreed with her. He said it was time laboratory research in interferon extended to clinic patients.

"I think you've got to distinguish between the Outback and the university setting and whether or not it is now ready to be used in the field," he said. "I would believe

that probably within the next year, most centres within the university setting will be able to take part in trials. This may be the only treatment that offers hope."

Dr Antonio Ponzetta from Italy, who has studied interferon on Mediterranean patients, said the drug could work.

"You may start trials but we suggest that you monitor during them," he said.

Half the local Chinese population has been found to be infected by the virus and 9.5 percent are carriers. Liver cancer ranks second among the leading causes of cancer mortality, with cirrhosis the 10th leading killer-disease.

Second Case of Cholera Confirmed in Territory

54400012b Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING
POST in English 4 Oct 88 p 5

[Text] A second person has been found to be suffering from cholera in the territory, the Medical and Health Department confirmed yesterday.

The 30-year-old pregnant woman living in Kowloon City was diagnosed following tests by doctors at the antenatal clinic at Kwong Wah Hospital.

The woman was immediately admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital for observation and further investigation. Late last night she was in a satisfactory condition.

The Medical and Health Department have classified the cholera as local, because the woman had not travelled outside Hongkong.

Health officers yesterday went to the woman's home in Kowloon City and the home of her mother, with whom she had had regular contact.

Seven other people who had come into immediate contact with the patient were given medication and their homes were disinfected.

A Medical and Health Department spokesman has reminded the public to observe personal and food hygiene to avoid contracting the disease.

He said cholera was endemic to the region. Despite this, the woman's case was detected because of local disease-surveillance methods.

A 75-year-old man is still in Princess Margaret Hospital after contracting the disease while in Macau five days ago. His condition last night was satisfactory.

A 65-year-old man found to be carrying the virus is under observation at the hospital and is in a satisfactory condition.

Hepatitis Immunization Program for All Babies Launched

54400020 Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 28 Oct 88 p 3

[Article by Mary Ann Benitez: "Drug Firms Win Hepatitis Deal"]

[Text] The Government has awarded a lucrative contract to two drug companies for the vaccination of all newborn babies against hepatitis B.

A free immunisation program covering the 65,000 babies born in Government and subvented hospitals each year will be launched today.

The 15,000 babies born in private hospitals annually are not covered by the scheme but can receive free inoculations at Government health centres.

Starting in the middle of next month, babies will be inoculated at birth and get boosters at three and six months, regardless of whether their mothers are infected.

Before the program, only babies born to infected mothers in public hospitals were inoculated.

Smith Kline Biologicals and Merck, Sharp and Dohme Research Laboratories—the only companies that entered tenders—will share the estimated \$5 million-a-year contract to supply the yeast-derived vaccine, produced by genetic engineering, over the next two years.

The Government decided to shift to the new vaccine because it is cheaper than the older ones, which are derived from plasma.

Merck won the contract last year because its bidding price was understood to be \$1 a dose cheaper than Smith Kline's.

The program was originally expected to cost \$10 million a year but the results of the tender exercise showed that the cost would be half that amount, with nearly eight times as many babies being vaccinated.

Mother-to-baby infection is a major route of transmission of hepatitis B in Hongkong, accounting for 45 per cent of infections.

Most carriers later develop deadly liver cancer and cirrhosis, as well as infecting others.

Liver cancer kills 1,000 people in Hongkong each year, making it the second highest killer among cancers.

Cirrhosis claims another 400 lives annually.

The testing of pregnant mothers for infection will continue so that a gamma-immunoglobulin as well as the vaccine can be administered to the babies of carrier-mothers.

THAILAND

Health Ministry Discloses Rise in AIDS-Related Cases

BK0811031588 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 8 Nov 88 p 3

[Text] The number of AIDS-related cases in Thailand has increased from 1,400 recorded in September to 1,560 last month, the Public Health Ministry disclosed yesterday.

The latest official figures—1,524 HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) cases, 27 ARC (AIDS-related complexes) cases, and nine full blown AIDS cases—were revealed yesterday during the meeting of the AIDS Prevention Coordination Committee chaired by Permanent Secretary for Public Health Dr Somsak Worakhamin.

The meeting, attended by about 30 government agencies, was aimed at working out a joint effort to prevent the spread of AIDS in Thailand.

According to the latest official figures, the number of the HIV cases rose from 1,200 to 1,308 last month. Most of them were drug addicts who used needles. Only five contracted the virus through blood transfusion.

The record also showed that 1,514 of the HIV cases are still in the country, one is living abroad and nine have died from other causes.

Of the 27 ARC cases, one is living abroad, 24 in the country and two have died from other causes.

Five of the nine full blown AIDS cases have died, according to the record.

Meanwhile, Dr Somsak said the meeting yesterday agreed to make AIDS prevention an "overt campaign".

He said the meeting shared the view that the most effective way to fight the deadly disease was to create public awareness through open campaigns.

In addition, the committee also agreed that assistance from private and international organisations should be channelled through the committee so as to unify efforts to fight AIDS in Thailand.

Dr Somsak added that foreign embassies will be notified of the committee's decision.

The meeting also agreed to help fund government agencies to conduct AIDS tests in fiscal 1990.

Dr Somsak said the Public Health Ministry spent 22 million baht and the Thai Red Cross Society spent six million baht last year to conduct AIDS tests.

The permanent secretary added that in his opinion the best way to control the spread of AIDS was to urge AIDS patients to come out and talk openly about their sufferings.

INTER-AMERICAN

Locust Spraying Effective in Caribbean

54400019 Bridgetown BARBADOS ADVOCATE
in English 22 Oct 88 p 3

[Article: "Locust Progress"]

[Text] Caribbean countries have reported some progress in using chemical spraying to wipe out crop-eating African locusts stalking the region, a senior official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said here today.

"In St. Vincent, the spraying seems to be having some effect as there is a high rate of mortality reported," said the FAO's Barbados-based regional director for the Eastern Caribbean, Frederick Zenny.

"They appear to be in patches and some may have gone into the interior and this is cause for concern..." he added.

The locusts, grasshopper-like insects that devastate crops, surfaced in the Eastern Caribbean last week, apparently blown into the islands by what is now hurricane Joan.

Zenny, who was instrumental in having an expert dispatched to the region from FAO's Rome headquarters said the organisations' experts had recommended a number of locally available chemicals which are being used to spray the pests.

"We have a bit of luck because the experts say these insects are sexually immature and will need another three weeks or so to reach sexual maturity.

"So we must take advantage of that," Zenny commented, pointing out that the insects were also in a state of stress after the over 3,000-kilometre journey across the Atlantic.

"Part of the good news is that blackbirds and egrets have gone after the locusts," Zenny said.

Zenny said that all the Ministries of Agriculture in the islands, as well as organisations such as the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, as well as his own office are collaborating in the fight against the pests.

Field officers from each body have been provided with information packages to assist them and farmers to eliminate the locusts. In Grenada, specimens of the locusts were being prepared for circulation to schools, farms and organisations to help them to identify the insects.

The locusts are believed to be part of a swarm which the FAO had been monitoring off the African coast since earlier this month and which were blown towards the Cape Verde Islands before being sighted about 1,500 miles from French Guiana.

Zenny said it was not yet known how the locusts will fare in the Caribbean environment since the climate here is unlike the desert regions of Africa and the sandy conditions do not exist here.

The locusts have been sighted in Dominica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda among other regional states.

The Bridgetown DAILY NATION of 19 October, page 1, notes that "government has called in the Defence Force in its efforts to wipe out locusts. Members of the force will cover the island today along with teams from the Ministry of Agriculture, gathering information on the infestation level of the insects.

"Spraying of the pests is also expected to start some time during the day. It is expected to concentrate initially on the southern and eastern coastal areas where heaviest infestation has been noted. Eleven teams will cover all the parishes, in an expansion of the initial limited survey that has covered some eastern and southern coastal areas."

BARBADOS

New Cases of AIDS, Related Deaths Reported

Female Victims

54400013a Bridgetown WEEKEND NATION
in English 14-15 Oct 88 p 4

[Text] Barbados recorded two deaths and four new cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) between July and September this year.

Of the four new cases, three were heterosexual women, two between the ages of 20 and 24 and one aged 25 to 29 years. The fourth case was a homosexual man in the 25 to 29 age group.

Barbados has now recorded 67 AIDS cases, 54 male and 13 female, since November 1984, with 45 deaths—a mortality rate of 67 per cent. Homosexual and bisexual males still account for the highest percentage of cases—49 per cent.

The latest statistics are recorded in a report compiled by the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization for the third quarter of this year.

The report, dated October 7, states that of 999 blood samples tested for AIDS during the third quarter, 831 were from blood donors, of which two were positive. Of the other 168 tests done for diagnostic purposes, two were positive.

The National Advisory Committee on AIDS presented its report to Minister of Health Branford Taitt earlier this month. The committee is now awaiting definitive policy directions on its recommendations.

The ministry has announced that it will set up an AIDS information and coordinating center, and has approved the establishment of an AIDS unit within the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Features of Battle Against AIDS

54400013 Bridgetown WEEKEND NATION in English
14-15 Oct 88 p 2

[Text] Barbados is in the forefront of the battle against the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), according to the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (BAMP).

In its latest Bulletin for August/September it notes that the Ministry of Health had just announced an AIDS center which would provide a central post for those coordinating these efforts to work from. And this, said BAMP would enhance the efforts already being made to combat this deadly disease.

The association said that if a potent "cure" for AIDS did not present itself in a very short space of time, the outlook for the year 2000 was far from optimistic.

BAMP called AIDS an even greater scourge than the use of illegal drugs. And, it noted cases of AIDS would possibly quadruple in the next ten years.

According to BAMP: "Since the early 1970s, the use of illegal drugs, with its widespread morbidity and mortality, has been recognized as one of the main stumbling blocks to gaining... a perfect state of world-wide health".

BAMP said that what was called for was "a responsible sex life-style where fidelity is important."

The bulletin also noted that Barbadians could now receive free medical attention at any of the eight polyclinics and the satellite clinics attached to them. They are also about to receive free drugs. In the Private Health Care System, drugs are subsidized if they are found in the National Drug Formulary.

BAMP's Bulletin declared health care in Barbados had improved greatly over the past ten years, especially in the area of delivery of Primary Health Care.

Local Scientists See Progress on Onion Blast Disease

54400014 Bridgetown DAILY NATION in English
6 Oct 88 p 24

[Article: "Blast Soon a Thing of the Past"]

[Text] Local scientists are now getting the upper hand on the onion disease, "blast", having licked the storage problem.

They have discovered the causative agent of the disease are working to isolate it through careful analysis of soil types, weather conditions and selected onion varieties.

Blast has been wreaking havoc on the local onion industry ever since the turn of the decade and in 1987, 12 scientists drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture and several regional agencies were mandated to investigate its causative agents and identify ways of eliminating the pest(s).

Low storage life had also caused concern to farmers and retailers but coordinator of the research programme, Winston Small, said yesterday their experiments in this regard had produced "some interesting results".

"The December trial at National hatcheries produced excellent yield under trickle and fertigation. Varieties which stored very well from this trial included Golden, Tropicana, Red Creole, Stavi and other varieties," he said.

Small added that costing trials would be carried out comparing trickle/fertigation with standard agronomic methods.

The group of researchers had already stated that once the "blast" and storage problems were licked, Barbados would become self sufficient in onions. Some Eastern Caribbean countries have expressed a willingness to import the food commodity from Barbados, provided they were satisfied with the quality.

Regarding methods of yield improvement, Small said that once the validity of their findings was proved, it would be advisable for farmers to use protectant bacterial and fungicidal sprays, organic manures, varieties less susceptible to the disease and careful husbandry methods.

He listed possible environmental factors as extended overcast conditions, higher than normal temperatures, waterlogging, nematode and insect attack, air pollutants, wind damage and abrasion by soil particles.

Scientists said eventual tissue breakdown in plants was caused by a bacterium called *erwinia herbicola*, which was isolated from onions showing typical "blast" symptoms. They warned, however, that other infections might also be involved.

"Blast occurs when combinations of environmental factors produce more stress than normal on the onion plant and render it susceptible to tissue breakdown incited by a pathogen (infection).

"In Barbados, onions survive under typical environmental conditions of soils of high alkalinity, high calcium content, low organic matter content and high day and night temperatures," they explained.

It was suggested that no specific environmental condition, on its own, was responsible for predisposing onion plants to "blast".

GUYANA

Health Officials Meet, Discuss National Problems

Minister's Remarks

54400015a Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 21 Sep 88 p 3

[Article: "Minister Stresses Need for Health Care Delivery"]

[Text] Senior Minister in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Noel Blackman, in making the closing remarks last Thursday at the evaluation meeting for programme heads and Regional Health Officers, emphasised the importance of proper planning in the implementation of the health care delivery programmes. Targets set must be met.

He said that effective management will reduce the need for both foreign and local currency and enhance the delivery of health care to the Guyanese people.

Both human and material resources will be more strategically used to derive optimum benefits, Dr. Blackman added.

Earlier, officials of the meeting had reported on the successes and failures of the health care delivery programmes in their various regions.

They alluded to the constraints that face them in successfully implementing the programmes. Major concerns expressed were the inadequate supply of drugs, potable water, medical supplies, and cold storage facilities for vaccine and blood.

Minister Blackman stressed that preventive care is less costly than curative.

"Proper sanitation in the environment must be enforced, required nutritional standards adhered to, and approved health practices inculcated," he asserted.

The meeting ended with a call from Dr. Rudolph Cummings, Maternal and Child Health Officer, for participants to put the necessary mechanisms in place to ensure

that improved health care of a high quality is given to the people in the various regions.

Successes, Problems Noted

54400015a Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 23 Sep 88 p 4

[Article: "Guyanese Enjoy High Quality Health Care Delivery"]

[Text] Health care delivery in the country continues to be of a high quality. It has enjoyed significant successes, according to reports to Programme Heads and Regional Health Officers, at their half yearly meeting to evaluate the performance of the health services in Guyana. The meeting was held at the Woodbine Hotel last week Wednesday.

Maternal and infant mortality, and morbidity have been significantly reduced. The programme to immunise at least 90 per cent of the children is on target. More intricate surgical procedures are done at both Georgetown and outlying hospitals.

However, successful implementation of some of the programmes was hindered by the lack of drugs and other medical supplies, inadequate water and electricity supplies, absence of cold storage for vaccines and blood in some outlying locations, and inefficient feedback mechanism and communication between Ministry of Health and health officials in outlying districts.

The Health Ministry, in order to minimise, if not eradicate these hindrances, has put some mechanisms in place.

Through the Regional Democratic Councils of which the health department is a member, representations have been made to have the water and drainage situation corrected.

New fridges have been acquired and those not working are being repaired, while spare parts are being acquired for vehicles.

Continuous educational programmes are carried out to train more health personnel and upgrade skills of others. Residents and school children are sensitised through education about health practices.

Joint Malaria Control With Venezuela, Colombia
54400011 Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS
in English 8 Oct 88 p 11

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Friday. (CANA)—A joint Guyana-Venezuela medical team will conduct an extensive evaluation of the "malaria situation" in the Guyana-Venezuela border area, the State-run CHRONICLE newspaper reported.

Arrangements for the assessment were discussed recently when Guyanese Health Minister Dr Noel Blackman met and held talks with his Venezuelan counterpart, Dr Montebrun in Caracas, the Venezuelan capital, the CHRONICLE said.

Guyana and Colombia have identified malaria control and immunology, with special emphasis on the production of vaccines, as areas of cooperation between their two health ministries, the State-owned CHRONICLE newspaper reported.

The paper said that the two areas were identified during a recent visit to Colombia by Guyanese Health Minister Dr Noel Blackman who met and held discussions with his Colombian counterpart, Dr Luis H. Arraut.

Approved Drugs Listing May Help Improve Supplies

54400015b Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 7 Oct 88 p 1

[Article: "New Drug Listing Will Lead to More Adequate Supplies"]

[Text] Prime Minister Hamilton Green, at a ceremony at the Office of the Prime Minister, Public Buildings, Brickdam, on Wednesday received the third edition of the 'National Formulary'—a comprehensive listing of all drugs approved for use in Guyana.

The presentation was made by Wilfred Lee, Executive Chairman of the Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation (G.P.C.) which co-ordinated, compiled and printed the document.

The third edition was a joint-undertaking of the National Formulary Committee, G.P.C., medical consultants from Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica and an advisory team comprising one member from each area of the medical profession in Guyana. The first and second editions were published in 1977 and 1982.

In May of this year, Senior Minister in the Ministry of Health, Dr Noel Blackman, in a reply to doctors at the Georgetown Hospital, who had queried the continued shortage of drugs at the institution, gave the assurance that a national formulary was being worked out which would lead to a more adequate supply of drugs.

The Ministry of Health will make copies available to physicians.

Taskforce To Battle Disease Attacking Rice Crop

Monitoring Unit

54400016 Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 27 Sep 88 p 1

[Article: "Taskforce Set Up To Monitor Blast Disease"]

[Text] A special taskforce has been set up to monitor the blast disease and to organise disease-free planting material for the next rice crop.

General Manager of Guyana Rice Milling and Marketing Authority (GRMMA) Charles Kennard is heading this team which has specific responsibility for assessing the need for seed paddy as a consequence of the outbreak for blast disease.

The taskforce is also to organise the procurement of seeds to meet the anticipated shortfall for the 1989 first crop.

Additionally, it has been charged with developing a programme for the zoning of varieties depending on their agronomic characteristics, and it is also to assess the performance of the new varieties now being evaluated so as to release the more promising ones for cultivation.

Meanwhile, field surveys of paddy fields have been extended to all rice growing areas to assess the extent of blast infection in the rice industry.

Teams of agricultural officers are now in Regions Two and Six holding discussions with rice farmers. At the end of this survey the crop losses would be known.

Crop Losses

54400016 Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 1 Oct 88 p 1

[Article: "Blast Destroys 37 Per Cent of Crop"]

[Text] Thirty-seven per cent of the current rice crop will be lost because of the blast disease.

In West Demerara, Leguan and Wakenaam, 50 per cent of the crop has been lost. A mere two per cent of the Corentyne crop was affected by the blast.

In Region Five, where 41,489 acres are under rice cultivation approximately 5,000 acres have been affected.

The variety most affected is the "Rustic", which is noted for its extra long grains and good export market possibilities.

During the week, the Agriculture Ministry has been conducting field surveys and Minister Vibert Parvatan has visited rice areas to assess the extent of crop loss.

As the crop progresses, the milling recovery programme will be monitored, Minister Parvatan said. Further field surveys will continue.

Guyana Rice Milling and Marketing Authority (GRMMA) has assured farmers that they will purchase blast infected paddy, the grades of which will be negotiable.

Regional Efforts

54400016 Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 4 Oct 88 p 3

[Article: "Farmers, Region Six Officials Co-operate To Fight 'Blast'"]

[Text] Agricultural extension officers and administrative officials of Region Six, East Berbice Corentyne, are working closely with rice farmers in the region to minimise the spread of blast in the rice industry there.

Vice Chairman Santori Lambert said last week that contacts between the farmers and regional personnel are being intensified to facilitate the effective monitoring of rice plots, to advise farmers on technological innovations necessary to improve husbandry practices, and to take remedial action to control the disease. A mere two per cent of Region Six crop has been hit by blast compared with the 50 per cent loss experienced by the Region Three farmers.

Region Six expects to reap all 30,000 acres of padi cultivated for the current rice crop. And it expects the crop, the second for the year, to yield an average of 22 bags to the acre.

Officials Discuss Strategies To Combat Blast Disease

54400009 Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE
in English 6 Sep 88 pp 1, 4

[Text] A team of officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, GRMMA, NARI and the Regional Administration, Region Three on Thursday met and discussed with rice farmers of that region the blast disease and planned strategies for combating it.

The team, led by Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture Cde Vibert Parvatan, saw the extensive damage done to rice cultivation by the disease.

In many areas, entire fields have been damaged. By conservative estimates, about 30 percent of the present crop in Region Three will be lost. The areas identified as crucial are Vergenoegen, Hague, L'Union and Harlem, with Vergenoegen being singled out as the most critical.

An official from the region said that blast was discovered about six weeks ago and farmers were advised to spray their crops with Kitazin, a pesticide. For various reasons, farmers did not heed this advice. One farmer claimed that the drug was too expensive.

Blast is a fungal disease that attacks the rice plant at all stages of growth. It is the most serious fungus disease of rice in Guyana and is recognised at the seedling stage by tiny brown spots on the leaves.

Later, the spots enlarge and assume the shape of an 'eye' with light grey centres and dark brown margins. Blast is found primarily along the banks of rivers and creeks, and especially where lands are cropped to rice for the first time.

The high relative humidity, high temperature, excessive use of nitrogenous fertilisers and drought conditions, or where water is insufficient at any stage during rice growth, are all factors that contribute to blast.

In an effort to combat the disease and to bring relief to farmers, a team led by Dr C.S. Sodhi, an Indian national attached to the Inter-American Foundation for Agricultural Development (IFAD), will cover the entire West Demerara, advising farmers on methods to contain the disease.

Minister Parvatan paid on-the-spot visits to rice fields in Hague Back and Vergenoegen where he held discussions with farmers. The Minister was also shown samples of rice affected by blast.

One farmer, Ganga Persaud complained that nothing is being done to control the disease. He claimed that no Regional Administration officials had visited the area to advise farmers.

Persaud also raised the question of compensation and added that NARI has not supplied the farmers with a new variety of rice in over a decade.

JAMAICA

New AIDS Victims Total 67; 40 Fatalities Reported

54400017 Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English
6 Oct 88 p 1

[Article: "AIDS Claims Three More Victims Here"]

[Excerpt] Three more Jamaicans have contracted the deadly disease AIDS, (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). This brings the number of Jamaican AIDS victims to 67.

The latest victims are an adult female, an adult male and a child under five years old.

More than 40 of the AIDS victims are dead.

According to Dr. Marion Bullock-DuCasse of the Epidemiology Unit of the Ministry of Health, in terms of the prevalence of the disease here, Jamaica "is doing quite well" compared to other Caribbean countries.

MEXICO

Transfusions of Blood Untested for AIDS Reported

54002001 Mexico City *EXCELSIOR* (STATES section) in Spanish 9 Sep 88 p 1

[Text] Culiacan, Sinaloa, 8 September—The Civil Hospital in this locality is making blood transfusions without tests to detect AIDS among donors, according to a charge made by Jose Alberto Gonzalez Valdes, chief of university coordination at that medical center, where an average of 4,500 persons are treated per month.

He claimed that the tests of blood taken from donors are sent to the Health Center, where an AIDS detection laboratory is in operation. Nevertheless, "it can take up to 3 weeks before we are informed of the results, and meanwhile the blood is given to patients who are in serious condition, even without checking on the potential danger."

That laboratory, which was supposed to operate at the Civil Hospital based on the same requirements, "has succumbed to excessive bureaucracy, which is destroying any attempt to prevent the immune deficiency syndrome."

"Persons of little means, coming primarily from the mountain region, are treated at the Civil Hospital. Hence, it is unjust for suitable equipment not to be provided to detect the disease at least within 24 hours after the blood is taken."

When a transfusion is made, the patient is saved from death, "but we don't know whether, with the blood supply possibly infected with AIDS, that person is being led to a slow but sure death."

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Shortage of Pesticide for Aedes Egypti Mosquitoes

54400018 Port-of-Spain *DAILY EXPRESS* in English 21 Oct 88 p 3

[Article by Kamla Rampersad: "Pesticide Shortage: Fishes To Control Aedes Egypti Mosquito"]

[Excerpt] The Port of Spain City Corporation is using larvicidal fishes (millions) in a bid to control the Aedes Egypti mosquito because of a pesticide shortage in the country.

A reliable source told the EXPRESS that the City Council has had "limited supply" of insecticides for "some time now" and that they are not sure when supplies are going to come in.

The EXPRESS understands that an influx of the Aedes Egypti mosquito was reported in Mucurapo, Woodbrook. However, because the Council had no Malaria oil to spray stagnant water, they have had to use fishes that would eat the larva. A spokesman at Empire Sales and Services, agents for pesticides in the country told the EXPRESS that they have not received foreign exchange allocation for importation. Therefore they are unable to supply Government institutions and other health departments with the required chemicals.

The source said, requests were made to Central Bank since June for allocation, but that they received a reply "very recently" saying that they cannot supply the foreign exchange.

The EXPRESS also learnt that the Port of Spain Council has no Baygon and just two months supply of Batex in both its emulsion and powder forms. Baygon, used for treating cockroaches finished a month ago and has not been refurbished.

There are only three drums of Malathian, used for the very populated areas of the Aedes mosquito, in stock at the Council.

AFGHANISTAN

Malaria Diagnosed in Parvan Province
54004700 Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
12 Oct 88 p 4

[Text] Over 800 malaria patients were examined and treated in Parvan province during the first six months of the current Afghan year.

A spokesman of the malaria department of the province told BIA that laboratory tests were done on the blood slides of 7,000 patients who had fever, and malaria symptoms were detected on 899 blood slides of the patients.

BANGLADESH

Press Note Explains Nature of Fish Disease
54500014 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
16 Aug 88 p 3

[Excerpt] A Press Note issued in the city Sunday night said that various confusions and questions still persisted in the minds of people about fish disease clarifications and information issued by the Fisheries Department of the government to the effect that there was no reason to be panicky and confused about the disease, reports BSS.[sentence as published]

The Press Note issued by the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock said that the government had constituted a 10-member task force comprising experts and scientists to take steps for resistance and remedy of the fish disease. The task force has submitted a preliminary report to the Ministry, it said.

The task force said that confusion in the minds of people about the outbreak of the fish disease had assumed such a proportion that in some places a tendency had developed not to eat any fish. But fish experts and scientists said the fishes of affected waterbodies were safe to eat. They at the same time pointed out that if the ulcerative syndrome of the fish was deeper it was better not to eat such fish.

Explaining the nature of the fish disease, the Press Note said that this disease was not new in this country. Appearing for the first time in Queensland in Australia in 1971 this fish disease has so far broken out in 11 countries including Bangladesh. This disease has been described by scientists as epizootic ulcerative syndrome. Starting from the leg and head this syndrome spreads to whole body of the fish. As the disease is infectious it spreads to other fishes living in the same climatic condition, it added.

This disease is noticed in shoal, gozar, puti, bym, kho-lisha, ayr, etc. But it is specially marked in shoal, taki, gozar, puti and bym, the Press Note said.

The Press Note described the report appearing in a section of press about death of people after eating fish of affected water bodies as totally wrong. This disease lasted several years in Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Burma and Indonesia.

Confusion also persisted in those countries about the fish disease at the initial stage. But in those countries no incident took place to the effect that public health suffered after taking diseased fish. Though confusion cropped up in those countries on the consumption of fish at the initial stage it disappeared totally subsequently.

On the basis of gathered information and in the light of experience, the task force expressed the firm view that the consumption of fish of affected waterbodies was fully safe.

"But it is better not to eat ulcerative fish as a matter of taste" the Press Note observed.

Researches on atmospheric study and prevention of disease are being conducted by different organisations including the Fisheries Research Institute.

EGYPT

Large Locust Concentrations Destroyed
NC2700175700 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
1500 GMT 27 Oct 88

[Text] Eng 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Rawi, director of the locust-fighting base in Aswan, has stated that locust-fighting teams in the south-eastern desert this morning succeeded in destroying dense concentrations of desert locusts. Eng 'Abd-al-Rawi said these locust concentrations were destroyed in a 15 square km area in (Wadi al-Yawdar), west of (Abu Ramad) in the (Jabal 'Ulbah) area.

INDIA

India, Soviet Union To Set Up Polio Vaccine Factory
54500013 New Delhi PATRIOT in English
21 Sep 88 p 7

[Text] Moscow, Sept 20—India and the Soviet Union have agreed to set up a polio vaccine factory in Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh.

A protocol for the joint venture was signed here last evening by the representatives of Health Ministry and bio-technology department of India and the Health Ministry of the USSR, report agencies.

Mr Sam Pitroda, advisor to Prime Minister, was present at the signing ceremony.

The initial capacity of the factory will be one hundred million dosages annually. The factory will meet the requirements of India, but later supply the vaccine to other countries. Soviet Union is expected to provide the know-how but the equipment will be provided by India.

JORDAN

Measures Decrease Chance of AIDS Spread

44000063 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
24 Sep 88 p 2

[Article by Nermeen Murad, JORDAN TIMES Staff Reporter]

[Text] Amman—Jordan has decreased the chances of the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) by 80 per cent and has looked into ways to combat the remaining 20 per cent.

According to the director of the AIDS Programme Control, Hani Shammout, "80 per cent of the cases of AIDS in Jordan were a result of circumstances which could be controlled through controlling the quality of blood donations and blood products."

According to Shammout, "Blood is not given to any patient in Jordan unless it is tested first for AIDS, and blood products imported from abroad also go through the test." This, he added, means that Jordan controlled all possible new cases which would result from the administration of blood and blood products.

The remaining 20 per cent are cases of AIDS which are contracted through sexual contact—whether heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual—and these 20 per cent could only be controlled through "health education," Shammout said.

Measures adopted by the Ministry of Health here include distributing pamphlets to secondary school students and to Jordanians travelling abroad. "This past year we started distributing leaflets to students, in both private and public schools, which are occasionally supplemented with informative lectures on the disease," Shammout told the JORDAN TIMES.

Travellers receive a mini pamphlet from their travel agents outlining the preventive procedures which every traveller must be aware of.

According to Shammout, efforts are concentrated on secondary school students because many of them will travel abroad to receive higher education.

He said the number of students who study abroad is 40,000, distributed over 120 different countries.

15 Cases in Jordan

The latest figures on AIDS cases in Jordan are 15 cases, all carriers of the disease but not suffering from its side effects.

There were three cases of AIDS-related deaths out of which two were diagnosed and treated in Jordan but they both contracted the diseases in a Gulf state where they received contaminated blood, the third case was a Jordanian student who was diagnosed abroad and died there, the body came back to Jordan for burial.

Eight of the carriers contracted the disease when they were treated for hemophilia with blood product factor eight which was imported from abroad. Another four of the carriers are expatriates who received blood in Gulf states which was originally imported from Latin American countries.

Although 20 per cent may sound large for a community such as Jordan, Shammout pointed out that in the United States 76 per cent of the AIDS cases are sexually related and as much as 66 per cent are a result of homosexual relationships.

Shammout stressed that out of the 15 cases and the three deaths, only four cases were as a result of sexual contact. "Therefore it is necessary to point out that most of the patients acquired the disease through no fault of their own and should not be stigmatised with the sexual connotations," he said.

Asked why Jordan has not asked all visitors to the Kingdom to carry certificates showing they are free of the killer disease, Shammout said, "The certificate only tells us that they were free of the disease when they took the test, but usually a carrier would not be detected if he or she were in the first five months of their sickness."

False Results

He added that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has discussed the issue many times and decided that the certificates could give false results. There is also the fact that almost all tourists to the Kingdom "do not come here for sex."

Shammout, who is also the director of communicable diseases in Jordan and of the immunisation programme, said that although prostitution is "a small problem in Jordan and usually carried underground, prostitutes arrested by the police are tested for AIDS."

Shammout warned people not to fall for the Western gimmick that condoms, a method of birth control, "could protect them from contracting the disease. "Condoms are not 100 per cent safe and as much as 10 per cent could get infected."

Asked whether he expects to discover new cases of AIDS, Shammout said: "I expect to uncover more old cases especially that Gulf states require all workers who apply for jobs in their countries undergo AIDS test."

SUDAN

Measures To Curb Spread of AIDS Reported

54004603 *Al-Khartoum AL-USBU* in Arabic 20 Oct 88

[Editorial Report] *Al-KHARTOUM AL-USBU* in Arabic 20 October 1988 reports on page 5 that Sudan now has 17 cases of AIDS in addition to 50 persons who tested HIV-positive. The information was conveyed by Mr 'Abd-al-Sattar Shawdali, the World Health Organization's delegate to Sudan, and Dr Abu-'Ubaydah al-Majdhub, who were interviewed by Salih Mukhtar 'Ajab-al-Dur. The two also stated that the disease threatens to invade Sudan on a larger scale, since the borders are open, movement is not regulated, migrants keep entering the country, total ignorance of the disease prevails, and people are negligent in finding out the

pertinent facts. They also pointed out that illiteracy prevails among 75 percent of Sudan's population, causing the threat to be even more ominous.

Mr Shawdali said that he and Dr al-Majdhub are in Sudan to enhance the efforts of the national committee to fight AIDS, promote health education, and train the necessary personnel. The committee, stated Mr al-Majdhub, has prepared and distributed the necessary educational media, which consist of six posters, five pamphlets, and a booklet outlining the general facts concerning AIDS. In addition, the committee has trained a medical staff which will train others to spread awareness concerning the disease. Mr al-Majdhub went on to say that medical laboratories have been established in Khartoum, Juba, and Port Sudan for blood testing.

According to Mr Shawdali, a 4-year program has been organized to contain the spread of AIDS in Sudan; the program enlists the help of the news media, health centers, religious leaders, and educators.

DENMARK

National Hospital Inaugurates New AIDS-Study Laboratory

54002413b Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in
Danish 11 Oct 88 p 7

[Article by Henning Ziebe: "From Smallpox to AIDS"]

[Text] The National Hospital yesterday inaugurated a new top secret AIDS laboratory where they will be able to work directly with the HIV virus.

It is the former isolation ward for patients with smallpox which will now be used to work with the AIDS virus. When the building was built about 10 years ago smallpox was not entirely eliminated as it was later, but then came certain infectious diseases such as Lhasa fever, etc., which fortunately have disappeared or proved to be less infectious than originally feared.

"Unfortunately there is no indication that AIDS will also disappear within the foreseeable future, and thereby the building now gets its third chance to do good, namely in the basic research of AIDS," said the senior doctor, Peter Skinhoj, at the inauguration yesterday. If new serious and very infectious diseases arise, the building can rapidly be cleared and again become the isolation ward for patients.

The prime mover behind the arrangement is the recently retired Dr Viggo Faber, who emphasized that a significant part of the expense of the new laboratory was paid by private sources, including the Spies Fund. Faber made two 4-month scholarships available for young people who wish to work in the AIDS laboratory to see if they can be inspired to make a research contribution.

Risk of AIDS Epidemic Among Youth Population Studied

54002413a Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
(Sect III) in Danish 7 Oct 88 p 2

[Article by Kirsten Sorrig: "Minimal Risk of AIDS Epidemic Among Youths;" first paragraph is BERLINGSKE TIDENDE introduction]

[Text] Choose your sex partners from among people you already know. And use a condom the first couple of times you are together. That is the best way to prevent an AIDS epidemic, according to social researchers.

The risk of an AIDS epidemic among the general youth population in an ordinary, large Danish city is minimal. Even if, for example, 10 youths age 14-20 in a city the size of Odense become infected, the disease will come to nothing.

That is the opinion of secondary school teacher and science licentiate Jesper Boldsen from the Division of Social Medicine at Odense University. He is giving a

lecture tomorrow entitled "The Risk of Epidemic Spreading of the HIV Virus Among Heterosexual Youths" at an informational meeting for doctors arranged by the Association for Family Planning, Denmark's Pharmacists Association and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Jesper Boldsen has for a long time stuffed his computer with information about a fictitious population of 12,000 youths ages 14-20 to investigate how an eventual AIDS epidemic would develop in a city the size of Odense.

"The conclusion is that the risk of an epidemic is extremely small. But obviously there still is an individual risk among heterosexual youths of becoming HIV infected," he said.

"What has happened here in Denmark is that we had a rapid spread of the disease during the 1st year of the epidemic within the highly vulnerable risk groups. But after that phase the HIV has not been able to spread to other groups to an especially large extent."

"That is presumably due to our very liberal attitude toward sex. That means that the young people dare to pursue their sexual exploits with people they knew before, and do not need to conceal it by cultivating strangers. I believe that is a significant part of the explanation for why we have not seen nearly as large a spread of the infection among heterosexuals as, for example, in the United States."

Know Your Partner

Even though the research on the spread of the infection is fictitious, it is very realistic. It begins with the large investigation of the sex patterns of 16- to 20-year-olds which was conducted in Odense 1984-85, before the large AIDS campaigns were carried out.

"I have used the information given by the youths about the age of their first experience, number of partners, and the age and geographic distribution of their pattern of partners as a basis for the entire study," said Jesper Boldsen. "After having followed the same pattern for a couple of years I have changed some of the assumptions—for example, infection via blood transfusion—and investigated what happened."

It shows that much more needs to happen to create the epidemic which everyone fears. But if, for example, 120 youths became infected through blood transfusions and at the same time began to choose partners from a wider circle, then that could develop into a catastrophe. "A condom the first few times is phenomenally effective, because the sexual patterns of the young show that over half of their sexual relationships are of relatively short duration."

Jesper Boldsen's best advice to youths is that they should choose sex partners with whom they already have carried out some contraception. Over the course of 12 years between one-third and two-thirds of all those in the age group will be HIV-infected, and an AIDS epidemic will occur among young heterosexuals—people from the same area. They should use condoms the first couple of times they are together with a new partner.

"If these two pieces of advice are followed there is no danger that there will be an AIDS epidemic among young heterosexuals," he said.

Latest Statistics on AIDS, HIV Cases

54002413c Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 19 Oct 88 p 2

[Article: "More AIDS in Copenhagen"]

[Text] In 1987 there were 42 new cases of AIDS registered in Copenhagen, where at the end of the year there were 121 of the total of 239 AIDS patients in the country, according to the city medical officer's annual report of health conditions in the capital. The number of HIV-positive individuals in the municipality is unknown but contacts with drug addicts seem to indicate that the spread of HIV in this group is increasing. A statistical survey need not be representative, according to the city medical officer.

SWEDEN

Officials Worried Rabies Epidemic May Spread From Finland

54002407 Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish
28 Sep 88 p 7

[Article by Helsinki Correspondent Stefan Lundberg:
"Hard Winter Increases Rabies Risk"]

[Text] A hard winter may cause the rabies epidemic that rages in the Soviet Union and Finland to spread to Sweden. The current campaign of mass vaccination of wild animals in Finland alone cannot prevent animals infected with rabies from crossing the ice of the Finnish Gulf and the Baltic.

In order for the fight against rabies to be effective, it should be coordinated with the neighboring countries, but the cooperation between the Finnish and Soviet authorities is sluggish.

"We have no idea what is being done in the Soviet Union in order to prevent the spread of the epidemic," says veterinarian Bengt Westerling who heads the mass vaccination campaign at the State Veterinary Institute in Helsinki.

The information from the Soviet side is contradictory. Officially, only one case has been found in the border zone, but Soviet newspaper reports talk about several rabies cases on the Kola Peninsula.

"All we know is that they are developing similar methods, but not in the areas that are crucial for us. They are presumably more concerned about their reindeer further north," says Westerling.

Campaign Threatened

Westerling admits that the entire campaign can be ruined if the neighbor to the east does not tend to the disease on his side of the border.

"If there is a hard winter and the Baltic freezes over, infected animals will be able to go wherever, even to Sweden," says Westerling.

"We do not even know for certain where the disease comes from. In the Soviet Union they suspect that the contamination originates in Finland," says Saara Reinius of the Veterinary Department of Medicine of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Helsinki who handles the contacts with the Soviet Union.

Reinius does not feel that the cooperation is poor. The neighboring country has been informed about the Finnish vaccinations, and we are told that the Soviet Union does not intend to do anything like that. The Soviet authorities last reported on the situation in July of this year.

"It would in fact be economically impossible to implement mass vaccinations in such a large area as the Soviet Union," says Reinius.

Many Unknown Cases

In Finland, 36 definite cases of rabies have been found since the epidemic broke out this spring. Westerling is, however, convinced that a much higher number of animals have suffered terrible deaths in the wild.

The spread of the epidemic in Finland bewilders the experts. All the cases have occurred in isolation deep in the country. Although the epidemic is suspected of originating on the Soviet side, no cases have been detected in the border areas.

"When we discovered the first case, I joked that perhaps a Russian killer dog had jumped off the train here in our zone. I have now heard that killer dogs are in fact found in empty Soviet freight cars," says veterinarian Markku Hamalainen in Elimaki.

Sophistication

The rabies epidemic, which is now approaching Helsinki, has resulted in a vaccination campaign of a never before seen magnitude in the three southern Finnish districts which have been hit with the rabies epidemic. The wild animals are not vaccinated by hand with a syringe, more sophisticated methods are needed.

Bait, containing vaccine that the wild animals hopefully will find and eat, has been distributed by 750 hunters. In the municipalities that have been hit, 15 baits have been placed in each square kilometer area.

The results of identical campaigns in West Germany have been good. Large areas have been completely free of rabies. The problem is that the epidemic has spread quickly again through animals that have crossed the border from countries that have not maintained the same measures. This risk is also quite obvious in Finland as well. The killer dog, which along with the fox is the great carrier, has found its way to Finland and Sweden from the east.

Inexpensive Measure

In view of the seriousness of the epidemic, the vaccination campaign is an inexpensive measure. Around 1.5 million kroner have been reserved for the campaign in Finland. Today, vaccination costs nearly half a million kroner. The animal owners in Finland have sponsored 310,000 doses of vaccine which dogs, cats, and other domestic animals are injected with.

The vaccine bait is approximately the same size as a match box. It consists of fish meal and animal fat mixed together. Inside the bait is a tinfoil capsule which contains a weakened living rabies virus. When the animal bites into the bait, the capsule is perforated and the vaccine sprinkles into the animal's mouth. One drop suffices. The rabies virus makes the animals immune to rabies.

It is also important to make sure that the vaccine bait get to the right mouths. The hunters who place the bait are ordered to cover up the bait so the birds do not find it. The wild animals for which the bait is intended find it with their sense of smell. The vaccination will be conducted again in April of next year.

No Danger to Humans, Pets

Test vaccinations have shown that 90 percent of the bait is eaten. If a domestic animal or a child consumes the vaccine, there is no danger as the vaccine is reduced so much in strength.

Bengt Westerling feels that it is impossible to conduct a preventative vaccination in Sweden. The reason is that the area is far too extensive and it cannot be predicted where the epidemic might break out.

"The plans for preventative vaccinations were also abandoned in Canada," says Westerling.

"Next fall, we will be able to see whether the campaign was successful," says Westerling.

Of the domestic animals, only one dog and one cat have been infected with rabies in Finland. The preys have primarily been foxes and killer dogs.

Almost all dogs and half of the cats have been vaccinated within the epidemic area. Dogs and cats can be brought into Finland if they are vaccinated against rabies at least 1 month ahead. However, when they are brought back to Sweden, they must be go through 4 months of quarantine.

TURKEY

52 AIDS Cases, 8 Deaths Reported

54002408b Istanbul CUMHURİYET in Turkish
28 Sep 88 pp 1, 8

[Excerpts] ISTANBUL NEWS SERVICE—Eight victims of AIDS have died in Turkey in the past 3 years and a total of 52 cases of AIDS has occurred, including 7 foreign nationals discovered in a nationwide search, it was announced.

The 12th National Dermatology Congress began yesterday, sponsored jointly by the Turkish Dermatology Association and the Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty Dermatology Branch. Information will be presented at the 4-day congress on the symptoms, spread, prevention, and treatment of AIDS, a threat in every country in the world. Various reports will also be presented at the congress on the treatment of other skin diseases. Associate professor Dr Ahmet Yasar Turanli presented a paper entitled "The Status of AIDS in Turkey," in which he stressed that, in addition to clinical indications, the Eliza test is employed as a laboratory test in Turkey in diagnosing AIDS, and the Western Blot Test for confirmation. Ahmet Yasar Turanli pointed out that the incidence of AIDS in Turkey had been examined by a risk group in seven [as published] groups: hemophiliac victims, transfusion recipients, prostitutes, intravenous drug users, homosexuals, heterosexuals, and unknown with a history of sexual contact. He said that to date eight AIDS victims had died and gave the following information in summary:

"The number of prostitutes who had contacted AIDS by March 1988 was one. The number who contacted the disease through sexual contact is eight. Of the 52 cases which have occurred, however, 19 are designated as "cause unknown." According to these results, measures to be taken in our country for the diagnosis and treatment of AIDS are: obtaining a better history in doubtful

cases, careful screening of blood and blood products, and providing persons in close contact with foreigners, such as tourist workers, with detailed information on the disease."

Dr Nilgun Atakan pointed out in a paper entitled "Treatment and Prevention in AIDS" that education is the most important factor in prevention because no effective AIDS treatment or vaccine has yet been discovered. Nilgun Atakan summarized the important points from World Health Organization circulars that is necessary to convey to the public.

30,000 TB Cases Reported Every Year

*54002408a Istanbul CUMHURİYET in Turkish
27 Sep 88 p 14*

[Text] Ankara (CUMHURİYET Bureau)—An average of 30,000 persons contract tuberculosis annually in Turkey, it was announced. Cemal Ozcan, chief of the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance Office to Combat Tuberculosis, said that the rapid decline in number of victims prior to 1980 came to a halt after 1985 and an average of 30,000 cases of TB are encountered annually. Stressing that 10 million persons worldwide contract TB each year, Ozcan said that one-half million of these die of the disease.

Ozcan said that no country expected tuberculosis to be totally eradicated in the near future because the disease is highly contagious. "Tuberculosis is seen in 30,000

people every year in Turkey. It cannot easily be brought below this figure, because it is impossible to eradicate the disease through medication and improvement of medical services alone. It is necessary to change other conditions also," he said.

Ozcan said: "Once the treatment for the disease was discovered—around 1963 in Turkey—the death rate declined significantly. However, while new treatment reduced deaths from the disease, a negative result emerged: We are confronted by people who live longer carrying the TB germ. They continue to infect healthy people. A weakened patient who spits blood and coughs is treated for a few months, his symptoms improve, and the patient thinks he is completely cured. He does not take his medication or go for treatment after he leaves the hospital although 9 or 12 months treatment is required for recovery."

70 Cases of Syphilis Reported

Istanbul MILLİYET in Turkish 4 Oct 88 p 2

[Text] Syphilis has been detected in 70 patients. Eight male patients contracted this disease through homosexual relations, six from frequenting brothels, two from call girls, seven from sexual intercourse with foreign women and 17 from "otostop" girls [prostitutes who stop cars]. As for female patients: one is a prostitute, two are drug addicts, six got this disease from their husbands and three from their boyfriends.

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